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“Drink Up! The Science of Hydration”

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Being hydrated is important for our well being, as well as our sport performance, cleansing our system, and helps decrease the chance of infection, kidney stones, and certain cancers. Being dehydrated can be detrimental to the body's functional systems. When dehydration occurs, there is a reduction in blood volume, an increase in heart rate, making the body's cooling system less effective, which in turn can cause heat exhaustion and heat stroke. People who may live in warmer climates may need more fluid intake.

The average sedentary individual requires less hydration than a person more physically active. A sedentary person requires approximately 3.7L water for a man (16 cups), and 2.7L water for a woman (11 cups). It is important to monitor weight loss after a workout to estimate the amount of rehydration needed to replace water lost during the workout. For every pound lost post workout, 20 to 24 oz. of water should be consumed. Research has shown that almost half of people who arrive to workout are not adequately hydrated. Researchers suggest 14 to 20 oz. of fluid (water, fitness water, or sport drink) one to two hours before working out for optimal performance. Some signs that the body is not adequately hydrated are thirst, dark yellow urine, and a large noticeable drop in body weight.

Before, during, and after a workout, types of fluids that can be consumed are water, fitness water, and sport drinks. Depending on the amount of activity and exertion performed, most light to modest exercisers, plain water or fitness water may be sufficient. For athletes, endurance trainers, and heavy sweaters, a sports drink may be needed to replace the electrolytes and carbohydrates lost during intense and vigorous workouts. It's best to assess individual or client need to help keep properly hydrated, especially during the summer months.